

**REMARKS**

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 2-4 are requested to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1 and 8 are currently being amended.

Claims 14-17 are being added.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1 and 5-17 are now pending in this application, claims 5-7, 9, 12 and 13 comprising the non-elected claims under the restriction requirement.

The rejection and objections to claim 4 have been rendered moot by the cancellation of the claim.

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 8, and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Aota, *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,954,362). In view of the claim amendments and for at least the reasons set forth herein, this rejection has been overcome.

Regarding claims 1, 2 and 8 (directed to the invention of the first embodiment), the present invention shows a shank having an end disposed adjacent to the end of the second shaft and another end being free, the shank having a smaller diameter than a maximum diameter of the end of the second shaft. As set forth by the Examiner, the Aota reference shows a shank disposed

adjacent to an end of the second shaft located in the first shaft, the shank having a smaller diameter than a maximum diameter of the end of the second shaft. However, the Aota reference fails to show another end of the shank being free. Specifically, the Aota reference comprises a shank interposed between two portions of the second shaft. Such structure may be problematic in that a sufficient contraction stroke cannot be obtained upon absorption of impact energy.

In contrast, according to the present invention, the shank is not interposed between two portions of the second shaft and a sufficient contraction stroke can be obtained upon absorption of impact energy. Accordingly, claims 1 and 8 as amended are believed to be patentable over the Aota reference. Claim 2 was cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Regarding claims 3, 10 and 11 (directed to the invention of the second embodiment), Applicant disagrees with the rejection for the reasons that follow. Regarding claim 10, the Office Action alleges that Figure 2 of the Aota reference shows a pair of expansions formed on the second shaft wherein the pair of expansions develops from an outer surface of the second shaft in a direction substantially perpendicular with respect to that of the first convex. However, when comparing the features shown in FIGS. 3C and 3D of the present application and those shown in Figure 2 of the Aota reference, it can be seen that this allegation is unfounded and that Aota does not disclose, teach or suggest this claimed feature. Accordingly, claim 10 and claim 11 dependent thereon are believed to be allowable over Aota reference. Claim 3 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

New claims 14-17 have been added to more clearly define the features of the present invention.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

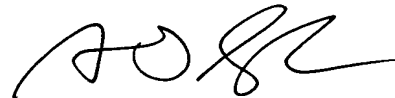
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

OCTOBER 6, 2003

Date



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